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EDITORIAL NOTICE.—The Editor cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. He must also decline to enter into correspondence with writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged. It is preferred that MSS. should be typewritten.

NOTES OF THE WEEK

By ceasing work last Saturday, British miners have lost the confidence of the public, brought undeserved suffering on millions of their fellows, and thrown the cause so vehemently urged by their leaders into the limbo of the unthinkable. The last increase in wages, we were assured, would not bring about a smaller output, but it did. Little wonder that Sir Robert Horne asked for guarantees that the nation would get more coal for more pay. The men's leaders demurred. "Trust us," they said: but precedent made that impossible. As an alternative, an independent and approved tribunal was offered—and declined. "Two shillings a shift more, and no conditions." The demand was unreasonable, but in spite of that obvious fact the men have held up the community.

It is for the nation to resist the imposition of a principle which, if accepted as feasible in the case of the miners, would destroy individual and national security. Before many days have passed, trade unionists must realise that they have abused the power so trustingly granted to them by supine Governments. They have no longer to deal with vote-nursing politicians, but with an impoverished and exasperated people. The foolish fanatics who claimed the nationalisation of industry as a panacea for our labour troubles must now be dumb. The community would never tolerate it now, in any shape or form. Always doubtful, they must feel doubly assured as to its impracticability.

The debate in Parliament produced from Mr. Lloyd George a very proper affirmation of the stand against the miners' idea of money first, and work (possibly) afterwards. The principles upon which further proposals can be put forward are (1) reference of the whole dispute to an impartial body; (2) that increased wages should have reference to increased output. No official support, we are glad to see, was given to the suggestion that 2s. or 1s. should be granted at once, in the hope that the miners will work better. This amounts to giving away the whole case. We notice

that Sir Owen Thomas, Labour M.P. for Anglesey, has resigned his seat owing to disagreement with the extremists of to-day. This is one sign of a loss of belief in Labour which is widespread, and which daily increases among thinking citizens.

Since he donned the shawl of Paisley to lead the forlorn hope of Liberalism, Mr. Asquith has lost the support of many who looked to him with confidence, and his recent pronouncement on Ireland will further deplete the ranks of the faithful. At Ayr this was brought home to him. The most ardent Home Rulers have grave misgivings about Ireland to-day, and Mr. Asquith's sympathy towards the open lawlessness of a small minority of her people who would terrorise the Government into concessions, will meet with little favour. Nor does the bitter exchange of recriminations between the Premier and Mr. Winston Churchill on the one hand, and Mr. Asquith on the other, do anything to advance the cause of Ireland, or raise the prestige of British statesmanship.

The more one examines the Addisonian housing scheme, the more foolish does it become. And not merely foolish, but frankly unjust. It means, in short, that those who have been thrifty enough to own a home must pay for those who haven't. Anyone who builds a house of from 920 to 700 feet super floor space before Christmas twelve months, may claim £260 to £230 towards its cost (provided the house is approved) from that widow's curse, the Ministry of Health. Presumably that is what the Housing Bonds are for, apart from supporting a swarm of officials. Nothing is charged for the help, which is free loan. It may be claimed by Tom, Dick or Harry, the man or woman in real need of a home, the speculative builder, or the mere speculator. Yet there are none ready to build, for the very good reason that, even with the bonus, houses are too dear to pay any reasonable interest on the outlay. In short, working-men are not prepared to pay the price of their own labour. It is but another instance of a theorist's inability to handle business problems. Dr. Addison is making a mess of things.

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Another case in which the products of present-day wages are becoming unsaleable is to be found in Wolverhampton and Coventry. In both centres unemployment is growing day by day, and although a few hare-brained enthusiasts maintain that with a factory and Government assistance they could stave off the dread danger, there are signs of its rapid growth. As Government help is neither more nor less than public contribution, it may be dismissed at the outset. The principle has been applied to houses, and while it is foolish enough there, houses are a necessity, which cannot be said of bicycles, motor-bicycles and motor-cars. These are, for the most part, luxuries; unfortunately, they are the staple products of Wolverhampton and Coventry. And as a luxury is marketable only when its price is commensurate with its desirability, Wolverhampton and Coventry are in a dilemma. Men will not pay their own wages. They have made bicycles so costly that they will not buy them. We do not live in an age of miracles; the ca' canny bicycle has no market, so Wolverhampton and Coventry are becoming centres of unemployment.

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones has been telling Mr. Fisher what he thinks of his education schemes. The Minister of Education has put in his defence; his opponent has replied, and so they continue. Meanwhile, Kensington Town Council has tendered formal objection to any expansion of a programme of which the cost, so it holds, cannot be met by an already over-burdened population. Education is relative, and requires careful adjustment. Mr. Fisher would train all and sundry on hard and fast lines, ignoring the object of education and its acquirement. Further, like other modern doctrinaires, he closes his eyes to the great laws of the universe, which have stood the test of all time: it is the struggle to acquire which perfects the individual—mere possession does not.

Nowhere has the new scheme of education aroused so much anger as in Scotland, where it bids fair to become insupportable in the country districts. Scotland led the world in elementary education, and at little cost, and the Scot paid for his education, and saw to it that he got value for his outlay. "Teach my bairns to read, write and count," he said, "and they can fend for themselves after that." How they "fended" is too well known to be described. The necessities of life were sacrificed to get education, and education so bought was prized, and used to the utmost advantage. But it was the struggle which made the character capable of appreciating and utilising the hard-won knowledge. Those who could not or would not fight for it, were left, and counted unworthy of the feast. No Government School inspectors or systems of examination can compete with a method of discrimination and selection so infallible. Mr. Fisher would spoon-feed all; as a result we must expect a spoon-fed generation, lacking individuality and initiative, and incapable of sustained effort. He would give one food to a million brains, and stunt their growth by malnutrition, without offering play to bent or talent. As boys and girls so trained must, when men and women, live and work in varying spheres, they prove in the bulk ill-trained for life.

Lord Weir is a clever man, and it is a pity that such as he cannot lead Labour instead of some who do. In his speech before the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce he put the case of the country from a business point of view. We have reached an *impasse* in industry: it cannot pay its way: and he would solve the problem by some measure of nationalisation, not of industry, but of labour. To the workman he would give security and stabilised wages, asking in return a free labour market, and, in a large measure, payment by results. Trade unions, he holds, are usurping the functions of Government; let the Government take over the work of the trade unions, guaranteeing unemployment pay and settled wages. "Oor Wullie," as he is familiarly called in the Weir works at Cathcart, knows

better than most the obstacles to be overcome in putting such a scheme to practical use. Free labour is certainly desirable, not only for industry but for the development of the race; but will the slackers who live so well behind trade union rules give up their easy livelihoods for the nation's good? And one must remember that the employers of to-day are suffering for the faults of their forefathers. Lord Weir knows how in his native Glasgow men and masters have lived and worked in an atmosphere of mistrust for two, three, and four generations. It is unpleasant to think of, but one cannot blind oneself to facts.

Taking a broad view of the outlook, one thing is essential and desirable—a greater degree of co-operation. It is absurd to hope for an alliance while the feeling of distrust remains. Russia has taught the world a lesson, and her failure even to feed herself for a couple of seasons proves the futility of any class hoping to stand alone. As a social organisation, each one is dependent on the others. We are born unlike, and we remain so; each has his or her useful sphere. And the pity of it is that in this country we have the best material. None can compete with the British manufacturers and traders in enterprise and brains; nowhere are the British workmen to be matched in skill, abuse them as some may. Yet here they stand grouped, as it were, on either side of an apparently insurmountable wall. Only remove that wall, and blend the fine material now on either side of it, and we hold a future roseate beyond imagination.

Mr. Montagu is an ambitious man, but he is not bereft of a natural shrewdness which makes him hesitate to follow precedent in other spheres. To be Viceroy of India is no doubt sufficiently tempting, but already Mr. Montagu realises that he has bitten more than he can chew. India is seething with trouble. The atmosphere is charged with highly inflammable material, and the discontent is not confined to the native population. Officials on leave are being sounded on the situation, and the Secretary of State must already have discovered that his friends in India are few and far between. He can go no further. On the contrary, he must know that already he has gone too far. Mr. Montagu would be as acceptable in India to-day as Sir Herbert Samuel is in Palestine—which is not saying much.

At the Spa conference there was, of course, much entertainment, but we are not surprised that the Belgian Government do not like the little bill for £3,200 on account of Corona cigars. The Belgians are said to have passed the bill on, and it is a scandal in its way, if anything is a scandal connected with official finance. It looks as if the gentlemen concerned had copied the vulgar rapacity which "wins" things in the army style. They could hardly have got through so much tobacco on the premises, even if they were like the devilish pleasant gentlemanly dog in the Fleet prison, who, Mr. Pickwick learnt from Mr. Roker, never left off smoking, even at his meals. It seems likely that in future entertainments of the sort cigars will be rationed. The villain of melodrama exhibits his gay heartlessness by incessant smoking: is it necessary for our legislators to be similarly distinguished?

What, exactly, is the British Empire Steel Corporation's position? Evidently it has an active press agent—what Yankees call a drummer—for certain papers would have us believe that it is being constituted to protect Britain from aggressive tactics threatened by the United States Steel Trust. But who inserts these eulogistic articles, and why? We have no faith in philanthropy where commerce is concerned, and if we are not mistaken, this is a Canadian venture promoted by some of the Canadian financiers introduced to us during the war period. British steel makers have had to deal with the Steel Trust of America for many years. Competition is no new experience to them, and there is less of it now, and likely to be less for some time to come. It is for this

reason that we wonder whether the British Empire Steel Corporation is designed for the nation's weal or for the welfare of a few. As the press does not puff without bellows, we shall doubtless hear more.

Gunning, the chief chronicler of Cambridge a century ago, records that in the census of 1810 the University of Cambridge was reckoned at 803 males, and 8 females. To-day Cambridge is still pausing over the admission of women to degrees. The syndicate appointed to consider the subject was equally divided, half of it being of opinion that women should establish a separate university for themselves. Oxford surrendered last week, permission having been given to woman

"Ut facili incedat jure Beata gradu."

It is late in the day to make objections, since women are allowed to attend men's lectures, to study the same subjects, take the same tutors, and go in for the same examinations. We are sure, at any rate, that they cut a better figure as dons than as M.P.'s.

If, as William Blake once remarked, Exuberance is Beauty, there must be a great deal of beauty about the average Press photographer, for his exuberance may be seen of all men. At the recent unveiling of the Belgian Memorial, for example, on the Embankment, two of him stood on the monument itself, in full view of the crowd, bowler-hatted and busy, plying their cameras, while the company below stood with heads bared or bowed during the most solemn parts of the ceremonial. Whatever they may have done for the readers of their papers, these photographing men nearly turned a stately ceremony into mere fussiness and vulgarity for the spectators, who could see nothing but them and their cameras. We recalled how, as Queen Victoria's funeral cortège passed along Piccadilly, the ex-Kaiser smilingly drew the attention of King Edward to a cinematograph operator plying his machine on the rails of the Green Park, and how the King turned his head away in disgust.

The Brabançonne is not, perhaps, the most easily remembered of national melodies. It lacks the simplicity of the British, to say nothing of the beauty of the Austrian and Russian—the latter of which may yet be heard pealing again through the streets of Petrograd. But we had hardly expected to find the tripping Belgian air so speedily forgotten by the London crowd. Yet at this Belgian tribute to England hundreds of hats which had been loyally doffed for 'God save the King' were replaced the moment the 'Brabançonne' struck up. The tune was apparently regarded merely as something bright for the military guard of honour to march away to.

The controversy between Lord Leverhulme and Mr. Augustus John on the latter's portrait of the former is reminiscent of the Whistler debates of forty years ago. Unfortunately Lord Leverhulme is a matter-of-fact business man, who looks upon a portrait he has paid for as a piece of property to be defaced or scrapped at the owner's will, while the artist claims a right of protection over it. But Mr. John lacks any trace of the caustic wit which characterised his great predecessor's advocacy of the cause. He painted a portrait which his sitter thought so ill of that he cut it from its stretcher and returned the outskirts, as it were, to their creator. We are told that this sending back of the cut canvas was unauthorised; but at any rate, the artist roundly rebuked his patron, who retorted that he had "saved his face," and invited the aggrieved painter to dinner, an invitation which was curtly declined. So the all-absorbing manufacturer of soap returned to his absorbing occupation, while the artist begged of a copy-hunting press the privacy of his choice. One can imagine the wrath and revenge of Whistler on such a patron.

There was a time when the indiscretions of Margot produced merely disclaimers on the part of relatives and friends of the great dead; now there is open re-

sentment, and, alas, with cause. Evidently the American version of Mrs. Asquith's autobiography, now appearing in the *Metropolitan Magazine*, differs materially from that published here, although both are distinguished by the same lack of reticence. There are occasions when the candour will be appreciated; where, for instance, the people concerned are alive and nearly related to the writer. Where, on the other hand, she writes of those who are dead, the position is more delicate. Thus one cannot but regret the reference to the domestic habits of Stevenson and his wife, especially as the information was obtained at second-hand, from the wife of John Addington Symonds, with whom the Stevensons stayed at Davos. The repetition of Mrs. Symonds's comments on the habits of her guests will arouse just resentment on the part of readers who are prepared to be amused, but not at the expense of a man who got so little from life, and gave so much.

The "knock-out," mentioned last week in relation to book sales, exists in almost every public sale-room. Auctioneers wink at the practice, and tell us it cannot be stopped. Some maintain that it is within the law, but we hardly think so. The auctioneer stands to lose by it, for thereby his turnover is reduced, also his commission; so he should not be a party to the fraud. But he may be an unwilling accomplice. There are instances where the knock-out is clearly illegal, for example, when property is publicly sold by Act of Parliament to the highest bidder. Close by our very doors this takes place continuously—the sale of pawnbrokers' unredeemed pledges. By law, these must be sold after a certain period, both for the repayment of the loan, and the benefit of the borrower. Here a group of dealers form a practically permanent "knock-out," and so long have they remained immune from punishment that they hold the second or secret auction in the public roadway outside the very sale-room wherein they bought at their own price. The practice is pernicious. It acts in restraint of trade and defrauds the public, be they buyers or sellers.

The new poor nowadays have need to be clever. Few know the law relating to pledging goods, least of all those who make use of the convenient lender of cash against them. If they did, the pawnbroker would have but a sorry time of it. If, for instance, he lends £10 on goods worth £20, and these are not claimed within twelve months, or any agreed period, the goods are not his to keep or dispose of. They must be sold by public auction, and from the proceeds he may retain his advance and legal rate of interest only. Any surplus he holds in trust for the borrower, to whom he must exhibit his certified books on demand, and on payment of one penny. It is lucky for the pawnbroker that few of his customers know the law under which their bargains are permitted. If they did, the familiar sign of the golden balls would disappear from our streets. A pawnbroker may sell an unredeemed pledge, but he cannot hold the proceeds beyond the amount of his loan and charges. Luckily for him, he is seldom asked to disgorge.

The cinema cannot be neglected. It is with us for good or ill, and some people in view of the pictures shown will be surprised to learn that there is a British Board of Film Censors. If, as we gather, part of its duties is to suppress harrowing details in death-beds, crime as a dominant factor, and excessive revolver shooting, all we can say is that it has a curious conception of a censor's duty. We learn from a constant frequenter of the films that American "gun-men" still occupy the dominant part in the programmes, though occasionally, as in Mary Pickford's latest film, it is a young girl who takes justice into her own hands with a gun. Stale and vulgar American stuff is being freely revived over here, and classic stories are distorted with popular additions or propaganda. Art should be free, but the cinema is business, not art, and is not improving the remnants of taste and manners in this country.

THE SCANDAL OF THE STRIKE.

THIS week we are plunged in a strike which will bring ruin and despair to thousands of homes, not only paralysing industry in this country, but also seriously affecting our Allies, to whom now we are unable to export any coal. Such is the catastrophe forced upon us by the utterly unreasonable attitude of the miners. Even the fierce Mr. Smillie in the later stages of the discussion saw that he was wrong, and tried to bring the dispute round to a peaceful issue. But the hot-heads, once exacerbated by his demands, have persisted in the path he pointed out to them, and are no longer ready to listen to their leaders. Whether the silly phrase "datum line" was really understood by the rank and file we doubt, and we suggest to the Government that negotiations with Labour in future might as well be carried on in plain English, which everybody can understand. When the "datum line" was rejected, the miners' Executive could still have ordered a fresh ballot on the question of an impartial tribunal; but we suppose they were afraid of the passions they themselves deliberately raised. They feared for their places; they yielded to the storm. One half of the original demands has long disappeared. The reduction of 14s. 2d. per ton on the price charged to the home consumer did not succeed as a proof of a new and happy altruism in the ranks of Labour, or an exhibition of Labour's power to make national arrangements, as if it were a government. The claim for increased wages, which remains, was shown to be based on figures which had no justification beyond the fertile imagination of Labour statisticians. The miners were offered investigation by an impartial tribunal. But the dictators will not listen to reason: they want 2s. more per shift, whether they do less work or more, and recent experience shows which we are to expect. No reasonable Government can stand a claim of this sort, which settles nothing, and establishes a precedent for money without work which would ruin any business. As it is, the miners are much better paid than a great many experts, who work very much harder, and have received little or no advance to compensate for increased expenses. It is also unfortunate for their claims that there is a drop in the index figure of the cost of living.

A good many miners do not want a strike; Mr. Smillie and other responsible leaders do not want it. Why? They know perfectly well that they have "put themselves in the wrong with the public"; and we quote these words from the press most favourable to their cause. The excuse made for the miners is that they are "less sensitive than any other group of workers to the influence of public opinion." They have been pampered into casual ways, intoxicated with the poison of power. Soon they will be learning what public opinion means, a force against which no Government, however secure, can stand. The public will realise to the full in universal losses and distresses, what this dictation by Labour means. Here is an object lesson more trenchant than tons of paper bullets and skilful propaganda can produce. The Englishman will feel it bitterly when the few decencies and conveniences of life he has recovered since the war are again removed. Indeed, the strike, if it goes on for any length of time, will make the standard of living much worse than that of the blackest days of the war. And black as the prospect is, many people are openly calling for a struggle to the end, instead of the dodging and paltering which has gone on between Labour and the Government for many months. The sorry business of bargaining was prejudiced at the outset by the absurd Sankey Commission, for which the Government were responsible. Now the time has come when we must know if any section of the community is entitled to bully the rest, and bring ruin and desolation to thousands of homes. So far the Government are standing firm, and refusing to consider concessions which would mean giving away the whole point at issue. Further discussions are talked of, but the whole question has been so narrowed down that it seems futile to reopen it in the sense that the miners desire.

One slight consolation for this revelation of what Labour can do, is that it will remove the dream of a Cabinet of Labour agitators to the distant future, if it does not break up the organisation of the trade unions. The Government are said to be fully equipped with preparations to meet the universal disorder and deficiency which is upon us. We sincerely hope so: it will be a grateful novelty, a remarkable change after the numerous delays and frenzied impromptus which nearly lost the war, and cost us so heavy a toll of the best men of the nation.

MORTALS' CHIEFEST ENEMY.

ON October 16, 1801, a gallant sailor, second only in his day to the greatest of all sailors, wrote to his friend a letter in which there was a sentence on which we might well ponder for a moment or two. It was of such simplicity that all but three words were monosyllables, and might have come from a child's first reading-book. It ran:—"I hope now we have seen the end of the last war that will be in our days, and that I shall be able to turn my mind to peaceful occupations."

It is difficult for the student of history to realize why Collingwood, for he it was thus yearning after peace, should have been so hopeful in this letter to Blackett. Napoleon, then First Consul, had, it is true, made proposals of peace to England, but they had been rejected. The Peace of Amiens was not yet, and though it came in March, 1802, it proved to be little better than a truce. Early in 1801, Pitt had given place to Addington; a change which, even if considered as it was by many at the time provisional only, could hardly have inspired the thoughtful with confidence in a prospect of permanent tranquillity. Pitt, as it turned out, resumed office in 1804, a week before Napoleon caused himself to be declared Emperor of the French.

How strange it reads, this expectation of and yearning for peaceful occupations from one who four years afterwards on that day of days, October 21st, 1805, was to lead the Royal Sovereign into action in the greatest of all naval battles!

October 16th, 1801. "The end of the last war that will be in our day."

October 21, 1805. Trafalgar.

There is a warning in the story. We have all been through "the last war that will be in our day," and we have fought and won the war that is or was to end all wars. Armageddon is, in fact, in the expressive language of the day already "a back number," and if only Mr. Smillie and his friends will allow us, we should all be ready to settle ourselves down to "peaceful occupations," excluding picketing. We have, most of us, written similar letters to our Blacketts, and perhaps in the judgment of future historians with less cause for our hopes. Security is mortals' chiefest enemy, especially in days when unrest is rampant throughout the world. If ever a word of caution was needed it is surely at a time when there is danger of a feeling of false security due to reaction; yet a short time ago when a distinguished Field-Marshal, influenced no doubt entirely by his sense of responsibility and duty to his country, sounded a note of warning to those whose business it was to see that we were prepared for war, he was roundly denounced as that most reprehensible of citizens, "a militarist," and he was attacked not only in the House of Commons, but elsewhere. In like manner the late Lord Roberts before the war was called to order by a pedantic politician in a subordinate office, young, it was true, but not young enough to think himself infallible. Public memory is short, and one generation is not over-ready to profit by the experiences of another. Gladstone's last effort in the House of Commons, described by a well known north country member, as "the discharge of heavy artillery to cover a retreat," was denunciation of the House of Lords in good set terms, and Sir William Harcourt some ten years earlier in 1884, compared that gilded chamber, it will be remembered, to Sodom and Gomorrah; yet in the next generation we find Viscounts Gladstone and Harcourt established there in all their

glory as the polished corners of the temple. Let us not imagine that even "the trenches" will have the slightest horror hereafter for those who have never been in them, or that the terrible possibilities of warfare in the air, or under the sea, are going to deter the Collingwoods of the future, whatever their nationality and however much they may desire peaceful occupations, from doing their worst or best on the day when their country needs them. In 1899, great hopes were raised at the Hague. An era of everlasting peace was being inaugurated by an American millionaire, and an eloquent preacher took as his text for an impressive sermon on a solemn occasion that verse of the prophet which tells of old men dreaming dreams, and young men seeing visions. The preacher's illustration of the old dreamer was the grand old man, *par excellence*, who had died the year before, and for the young visionary, he took the then Tsar of all the Russias. The dreamer is now himself little more than the shadow of a dream, and the dicta of one who was once worshipped as an oracle are now rarely quoted, and are then received with chilly indifference; while the appalling fate of the visionary Emperor will supply the pedagogue and poet with material for pointing the moral of the vanity of human wishes to future generations in the place of "Swedish Charles." May visionaries inspire our leaders, but let them not lead themselves. According to Lord Morley, Napoleon III. was described as an ill-bound volume, half Machiavelli and half Don Quixote—a type very dangerous to the peace of the world, and a type that may recur. Lord Morley himself, by the way, is a visionary who has inspired many men by his writings, and would have inspired many more, if he had never left the study for office. He might well be described as a well-bound volume, Library Edition, half Don Quixote, and half Mill. After our day's toil, let us dream our dreams, and indulge in our visions, but "with the chain up." The strong man in his wisdom never forgets to protect his house from the thief that cometh by night.

THE INSTITUT DE FRANCE.

ON the day before the famous *Convention* of the Revolution concluded its labours (October 25, 1795), it passed the law which founded the *Institut*, to which was assigned the triple care of "the progress of science, the benefit of all men and the glory of the French Republic." On Monday next, October 25, 1920, the *Institut* will, therefore, celebrate its one hundred and twenty-fifth birthday—an anniversary which will bring to that famous foundation the respectful congratulations of the civilised world.

In England we pride ourselves, let us hope not unduly, upon certain things that are unattainable elsewhere; such as Oxford, and green lawns, and our Navy. Other countries have their own special objects of universal admiration, and among these the *Institut de France* holds a supreme place in the world of culture. Less ancient by centuries than the great Universities of England, less democratic in its foundation than the German seats of learning, the *Institut* provides, nevertheless, that which France has always demanded—a recognised authority for learning in all its branches, whose *imprimatur* finds currency in every corner of the globe. The men who founded it, amid the ruins and the rumblings of the recent political earthquake, were drawn from various classes of the community, yet all were animated by two guiding principles in regard to learning: first, that all the arts and sciences which contribute to the well-being of the body and brain of man are inter-dependent one upon the other; and second, that these intellectual possessions, being at the service of the nation, must be under the protection of the State, whose duty it is to stimulate, encourage and reward them. The founders realised, partly in anticipation, that the France of that day, with its passion for centralisation, did not provide a soil congenial, as in England and America, to the existence of many great Universities of Learning and Teaching which, whilst they fostered the spirit of intellectual liberty, risked the introduction of what Renan calls "charlatanism et

sottises" into their curricula. They held that "*la vraie science*" must be protected to the uttermost by the discipline of scientific authority, whose voice will always be heard and respected above the clamour of passing fashions. Wherefore, in spite of changing political dispensations which altered and modified the original Constitution of 1795, the *Institut* remains for France the protector and pontiff of the five Academies of which it is composed.

These Academies, except that of Moral and Political Science, were created long before the Revolution which abolished them. The most famous, the *Académie Française*, was founded by Richelieu in 1635; the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, and the *Académie des Sciences*, by Colbert in 1663 and 1666 respectively; and the *Académie des Beaux Arts* was ultimately formed in 1671 by grouping the smaller foundations for the study of sculpture, painting, music and architecture. During the forty years that succeeded the Revolution, many new attempts were made to re-classify the arts and sciences into new groups and according to new systems; but all of them failed, in whole or in part. Experience seemed to point to the restoration of the old Academies, as providing the most scientific and satisfactory classification; this was achieved, and now the *Institut* is universally recognised as the spiritual home of all French learning, where knowledge is tested, merit is rewarded, and genius is crowned.

To compile a list of the famous men who have been members of the *Institut* during the past century and a quarter, would be to cite the names of very nearly all the most famous men in France during that period; and if we were to add to these the long tale of "corresponding members" from foreign countries, who are admitted to all but one of the Academies, we should find therein a brilliant recognition of what the intellect of Europe has contributed towards the sum of human achievement. The *Académie Française* alone is exclusive, and admits no foreigners within its ranks. It alone preserves its peculiar costume, for use on great occasions; its own ceremonial for election; and its special ritual for admission to the high company of the "Immortals." When we read that a certain celebrity is elected to the *fauteuil* of a deceased member, we are reminded that King Louis XIV. presented forty arm-chairs to this Academy, in order to quench the heart-burnings of three eminent Cardinals who complained that they had to sit on hard benches, whilst the three officers of the Academy were provided with comfortable seats. When we hear that the Academician-elect has submitted his speech on admission for the approval of his colleagues, before delivering it, we recall that this formality was invented by Napoleon, who insisted on perusing all such orations in case they should contain matter subversive of his régime. In the case of Chateaubriand we may suppose that this precaution was justified, for that celebrated writer declined to make the alterations suggested by the Emperor, and never delivered his address. In later years Emile Ollivier followed the same course; and at this moment the Academy is wondering whether, if ever, M. Clemenceau will present himself for admission (after having been elected two years ago), and submit his speech for criticism and amendment—a necessary preliminary to being allowed to wear the green coat, to take possession of his *fauteuil*, and to receive the traditional annual emolument of twelve hundred francs.

It is rare in this ultra-conservative body to elect any man who has not a distinctive claim of a literary or artistic nature to the suffrages of the Academy. This point was solemnly raised in 1885, when the engineer Lesseps was chosen to sit with the elect. Renan, in his speech of welcome, made light of such criticism, and in the course of his address he delivered a remarkable prophecy:—

"The man whom we are sure to elect one day is the General who will lead us to victory. We shall not criticise his literary style. We shall choose him by acclamation without stopping to discuss his writings. Brilliant will be the occasion when we receive him amongst us. What competition there will be for

seats! How fortunate to be the President at such a ceremony!"

The Great War has brought this thing to pass: not only was Maréchal Joffre elected during the height of the conflict; but, when Germany had been brought to her knees, when victory was ours and peace had been signed at Versailles, Maréchal Foch was chosen to occupy the vacant seat of the Marquis de Vogué and of his famous ancestor, the Maréchal Villars. We shall not easily forget the reception of the great deliverer on that memorable occasion. The cupola of Cardinal Mazarin's palace, the present seat of the *Institut*, has looked down upon many an historic scene; but surely upon few so brilliant as that when the intellectual giants of France, the flower of her armed forces, and representatives of allied culture from all parts of the world assembled to pay a supreme honour to Field-Marshal Foch. Rarely, indeed, has the Academy elected a man of war to sojourn in her Temple of Peace, whose courts formerly were crowded with bishops and savants and politicians. It is to the glory of this great foundation, as Sainte-Beuve has written, that her doors are not so closely shut that she cannot hear the voice of the people. She does not forget that she is the child of the *Institut* that re-created her, the grandchild of the Revolution. So it comes about that, as times change, she elects candidates representative of the new era; thus straitly conforming to the spirit of the age wherein she was re-born, and ensuring for the parent *Institut* a life of ever-increasing usefulness.

This is not the moment to argue, or attempt to decide, whether such a national centre of wisdom is desirable for Great Britain, or whether it could flourish within our gates. The task we set ourselves is more agreeable; to recall, on this auspicious anniversary, some of the main features of an invaluable national achievement, and to offer to the *Institut de France* a tribute of gratitude and homage for a life well spent in the service of mankind.

THE RECOVERY OF THE ENGLISH THEATRE.

THERE are two clear signs of the recovery of the English theatre. We do not allude to distant enterprises in Hammersmith, or Hampstead, or Chelsea, where Mr. Nigel Playfair, Mr. MacDermott and Mr. Bernard Fagan are demonstrating, not for the first time, that in things dramatic civilisation varies inversely with the distance of its habitation from Drury Lane. We have in mind the regular activities of the West End theatres. The first of the clear signs to which we allude is the tendency of dramatic authors to deal once more with present political and social conditions, a tendency which the playgoer has shown a most decided disposition to encourage. Mr. Sutro's 'The Choice,' and Mr. Harwood's 'The Grain of Mustard Seed,' are the most successful examples that occur to us. Both plays dealt with social and political conditions of the moment in a frank and immediate fashion, and both plays largely owed their success to that circumstance. A less successful example is Mr. Somerset Maugham's 'The Unknown,' the attempt of a clever dramatist to tap the large reservoirs of intense, but puzzled religious feeling which, systematically used, would suffice to run the dynamos of a New Religion. Yet another example is 'The Right to Strike,' the pertinence of which is only too obvious. The value of these plays is that they bring the theatre into touch with reality. They enable playgoers to test the thing they see in the light of their own experience and observation. For some six years the theatre has been living in the vacuum which nature abhors. Plays are spawned by plays, without reference to life, until they come to be more like chess-problems than expressions of life presented in dramatic form. The unreality of such plays, plays which are written wholly according to formula, escapes notice so long as life is kept sufficiently at a distance, so long as the formula is logically worked out, and so long as the public is trained to accept it from force of habit. As soon, however, as the dramatist brings in a touch of the life we know, as soon as he deals with problems with which we are personally

confronted, and with which we have personally grappled, we have at once a standard, low or high according to our intelligence, whereby to judge whether he is merely repeating a theatrical formula at the twentieth remove, or whether he has seen and felt for himself the ideas or emotions which he is making so much theatrical fuss about. The dramatist who puts a Labour leader, or an ex-service man, or a Whitehall stenographer on the stage, challenges our own impressions of these people. We know at once whether he is writing from conviction, or talking through his hat. The playgoer becomes his own critic, active, discriminating and lively, a circumstance which is essential for the health of the theatre.

An even better sign of the times is the return to our stage of the comedy of character, a comedy which consists in a skilful presentation or exposure of men and women rather than in the contriving of situations. The 'Romantic Young Lady' at the Royalty Theatre is a pure comedy of character. The incidents arise out of the author's desire to exhibit his people in revealing attitudes and declarations. There is nothing needlessly managed or invented about his plot. Our pleasure arises from being enabled to see into the minds of his people. We are only interested in what they do as helping us to understand what they are like. There is no unnecessary action, none of the theatrical hustling and fidgetting which is so wrongly supposed to be necessary in order to capture and retain the interest of an audience. The end of drama is not action. Action is only a means, and in any case the action we need is significant action. In some cases the most significant action is no action at all. There is more action of the right dramatic kind in a soliloquy by Hamlet or Macbeth than in the exits and entrances of all the actors who have rushed into or out of the wrong room in all the farcical comedies written from the beginning of time. There is real dramatic action in the wise talk of the old grandmother who sits in her chair at the Royalty Theatre, telling us of her three departed husbands. There is no real dramatic action in the elaborate plotting whereby at a theatre near at hand Miss Iris Hoey gets herself shut up in a round tower with a young gentleman in the middle of the night. The so-called action of the ordinary farcical comedy is frequently the complete reverse of dramatic action. Dramatic action is action that reveals the characters of a play and moves them forward to an appropriate destiny. The action of nine plays out of ten does violence to the characters it should endeavour to reveal, requiring them for the sake of effect to do impossible things. It deliberately delays any normal or sensible conduct on their part, until the author, grown tired of posing and arranging them in agitated scenes and unlikely attitudes, is ready to ring down his curtain.

The contrast between the dramatist who thinks and plans in terms of character, and the dramatist who thinks and plans in terms of situations, is strikingly exemplified in 'The Grain of Mustard Seed.' Mr. Harwood's business is with character and with social portraiture. He desires to exhibit a group of men and women who embody the post-war spirit in society and politics, and his action is throughout designed to enable this exposition to be made in the clearest and most efficient manner. The scenes and incidents are not presented for their own sake. They grow from the author's idea and result from the author's characters. When his action has served its turn, he has no further use for it. He rings down his curtain on a final scene which to those who have learned to demand action for its own sake seems unfinished and inconclusive. Those, on the contrary, for whom action is a means and not an end in itself, at once realise the aptness of his conclusion. He has finished his exposition. We know his characters as far as he is able to make us know them. His action, for those who have followed it as a means to his end, is thus complete. That public, however, which has become used to action for its own sake, and has got into the habit of assuming that the only possible kind of action consists in refusing to marry someone for three acts, and finally marrying someone in the fourth (or something of that kind), is a little discon-

certed to find that Mr. Harwood's action ceases when it is no longer significant, even though it has failed to conduct the heroine into the hero's arms. Mr. Harwood's play is a triumph of the comedy of character over the comedy of situation. It is a hopeful sign that it should have so successfully held the stage against its inferior rivals.

BORES.

WE much wish that Thackeray had written a Book of Bores instead of his Book of Snobs, which on the whole fails because its specimens are not first-class examples and only fit the rather poor definition with which he opens. He has given us so many living portraits of bores in his novels, he had such a true scent for a bore, being the reverse of one himself, that his gallery of them would have been immortal. And he might well have included the bores of history from Cato to Cicero, from the heroes of the Dunciad to the "Blues" of Tunbridge Wells, from Joanna Southcott to Mrs. Eddy, from Welbore Ellis to the ruck of our present parliamentarians. Disraeli once summed up a bore as the person who can only talk and is perpetually talking on a single subject; and there is a typical eighteenth century story about a very minor poet who was so bent on reading his verse aloud to his victims that he used the opportunity of Dr. Graham's mud-bath patients being immersed up to their chins to pursue his profession without any chance of being baulked. It is quite a mistake to imagine that bores shun bores. One good bore deserves another, and will even seek him out.

There are even in our own period big bores and small bores so self-conscious that the bounds of boredom have been enlarged. In life, in literature, most people are speaking about themselves without the excuse of cleverness or the antidote of humour. We regret to say that of late women are the worst offenders. They will prose for pages about what they have "done" in the war, or what they are undoing in the peace. They will tear their emotions to tatters in fiction or prate of theories which they call problems. Every undiluted theorist is a bore born, and the faddists or fanatics are mostly super-bores. Mr. Smillie is the bore as baby, "Comrade" Lansbury is the bore as bleater, and when an Irishman takes to boring he beats the record. Most philosophers are bores, because they are monomaniacs who render the most interesting of all subjects unintelligible. Kant, be it said, despite his veil of reverence, is a colossal bore, and the coteries who assemble to lecture each other on abstractions and complicate simplicity are bores to the bone. So are the societies that live on "explaining" poets. Indeed, all mutual admirationists and most "intellectuals" are boring enough to clear the street of the man in it.

But these are not the bores of daily occurrence. The Club bore is too familiar for description, but the domestic bore, though usual, is not sufficiently shunned. There is the mother who can converse of nothing but her children, till the milk of human kindness dries up. There is, too, the art-collector who can discourse of nothing but his "finds," and is as learned in pedigrees and prices as the horse-lover in the Racing Calendar. There are the authors, male and female, who bring every topic back to their own books, and this trick of harking back to self-centredness is perhaps the most hideous refinement of the cruel art. The railway-carriage bore is an adept at this game. He gets you into conversation against your will, and, before you are aware, hinges everything on politics or golf. You are locked up; there is no escape, no "sic me servavit Apollo." And by the same token Apollo himself with his endless twanging of one instrument and his obsequious circle of nine females must have been as much of a bore as Samuel Richardson. Ixion, may be, was hurled from Olympus, not because of his peccadillo, but mainly for his exceptional dearth of celestial boredom. Weddings are golden occasions for bores of all sorts: the Ancient Mariner who button-holed the wedding guest is a mystic type. Then there

is the bore who revels in accidents or diseases, and twists every triviality into some remembrance of them which has happened to friends or friends' friends. And there is the extreme boredom of the palmist—frequenters or spirit-makers, who insist on engrossing you by recitals about themselves which are the lures of this hobby; indeed, they pay to hear about themselves for hours. The bores who write to the newspapers on early birds, late trains, second-hand shibboleths, and premature platitudes are intolerable, and the more so when they strive—like insects—to take colour from the leaves of vulgarity or sensation.

But, after all, we should be very careful how our instances are applied. For the truth is everyone is a bore to somebody. We have only to meet him, and our hyperborean fame is established. Suicide from ennui would be more frequent, if these potential encounters were common. What sermon cannot be a bore? It is the sense of being shut in that weighs us down as in some mountain-pent valley. Talleyrand, however, once found a way of escape. Walking with a bore in the streets, he was at his last gasp, when he noticed a yawning man advancing towards him. "Hush," he exclaimed, "*We are observed.*"

CORRESPONDENCE

REPRISALS.

SIR,—The letters from Major Heathcote and C. H. B. Boulton, published in your recent issue, are welcome evidence that the King's loyal subjects are getting restive at the continual failure of the Government to prosecute criminals who are doing their best and worst to overthrow the State. The unspeakable Lansbury in his Bolshevik paper has openly said that he is out for a revolution; yet he is not tried and shot! A year ago the railwaymen leaders said they would starve—that is *murder*—the country in a week. They were not prosecuted!

The lamentable failure of the Government, which does not govern, either to stop murder in Ireland or apprehend the murderers, has resulted in a stern remedy being tried—reprisals. The miscreants have been told, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, etc.,," and already there are signs of salutary results.

And now the revolution-mongers have engineered a disastrous strike in this country. Even should it be of a short duration, it will mean ruin and unemployment for thousands, and should it be prolonged, should the Thomases and Cramps and Bevins come in and complete the Trinity of Terror, then it is fairly certain that many women and little children will die of hunger and cold. Will there be no reprisals? The husbands and fathers of the murdered women and children will answer the question.

J. H. SEPTY,
Major.

RICARDO'S LAW OF SUBSISTENCE.—MINERS' WAGES.

SIR,—Ricardo's law is sound when it is borne in mind that the term "subsistence" is not a fixed, but a variable quantity. Wages for a stable state of society must be a function of production.

The Indian in British India has, generally, for subsistence, a loin-cloth for clothing, a reed hut for dwelling and chowpatties, curry and rice with a little salt, ghee, and sugar for food.

The British workman has for subsistence, a good coat, waistcoat and trousers for clothing, a (more or less!) reasonable house for dwelling, bread, butter, cheese, meat and beer for food. He has also good roads for his bicycles, side-cars, char-a-bancs, and even motors, railways and rivers.

The Indian has a low form of subsistence, because his average production is low; the British workman has a higher form of subsistence, because his average production is higher.

Wages, scientifically, are a function of production. So, scientifically—and, I think, reasonably—wages should depend on production.

In the past—under the Manchester system—employers exploited their workmen. There was danger in this, danger which has now come home to roost. But the danger that faces us now of the many workers exploiting the few employers is far, far greater. If pursued, it must make for the country “living beyond its income.” Lenin and Trotsky have shown, in human experience, what this ends in. And *please* remember this:—even the League of Nations does not propose to set up any International Court of Bankruptcy.

“My other piece of advice, *Copperfield*,” said Mr. Micawber, “you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery.” Note: These are the exact words of the sage, copied from his original statement.

F. C. CONSTABLE.

Quem Deus vult perdere—! !

THE MINERS AND THE NATION.

SIR,—Mr. J. Ellis Barker’s interesting strictures on views I have expressed in replying to his letters suppose me to be at variance with him on some points regarding which we really are in agreement. I ask you, however, to allow me, instead of facing about what are minor questions, to go to the root of the most important question the financial world has ever had to face. And though in that he may not perhaps be consciously against me, he evidently is not with me.

That question is involved in the fact that our financial legislation creates an important difference between what is in fact the position of the individual, and what is now the position of the nation, as regards the mortgaging of future earning power.

Though the individual is free to mortgage his own earning power, he is not allowed legally to mortgage that of his children: the interests of civilisation have stepped in to protect the rising generation against being born into a condition of slavery created in that manner. John Smith may leave his son, John Junior, a legacy of £10,000 in Consols, but he may not impose upon him a legacy of £10,000 of debt. John Junior is entitled to please himself as regards accepting, or rejecting, either legacy.

That protection, given to John Junior as an individual against individuals, is not extended to him against a nationalisation of debt. Under the régime of nationalisation he may be born into, and kept in, a condition of bondage for the payment of a legacy of debt. His future earning power is to-day subject to a life-long mortgage to pay interest on our war debt.

I must repeat that at the close of the Napoleonic war it was urged by some financial men that the war debt ought not to be regarded as a charge on the country’s revenue; but ought to be immediately paid off by assessment on the existing capital of the country. That, which I consider the sane business view of the matter, was unfortunately overruled, with the result that at the opening of our great war for freedom in 1914 we had still on our shoulders £600 million of the debt left unpaid at the close of the war in the year 1816. To that we have added the greater part of the cost of our own war, making in all a war debt of about £8,000 million. Is it equitable to pass that on to future generations; is it expedient to endeavour to do so?

I contend that the debt is not more than can be easily and promptly paid by assessment on capital for the purpose; and that the alternative of paying an annual charge of £450 million for fifty years is theoretically difficult to manage; and, as a practical question, to count on working that charge smoothly for fifty years is financial folly. It is enough to make the angels weep to see the Chancellor’s long-continued struggles with his Funding Loan. And it is doubly sad to see our captains of industry obliged to dock wages to meet the Chancellor’s income-tax: if the money which might be available for wages is snatched from them for income-tax, our leaders of industry will gradually find out how to employ capital in Africa or

Asia, or wherever they can find themselves less handicapped. Belgium is now a paradise for the employment of capital; she has truly won the war, as she indeed deserved to win.

I contend that it is as much at variance with equity and with expediency to make the coming generation liable for money paid away before their time so as to stand unrepresented by any material asset, as it would be to make a child liable for the debts of a father leaving the debts without their equivalent in material assets.

Legislation is now wanted to create protection against state action similar to that which already exists against individual action: or, even without special legislation, it ought to be understood that Peace Celebration creates maturity of war debt.

WM. LEIGHTON JORDAN.

AN IRISHMAN ON IRELAND.

SIR,—I am an Irishman, and for that reason I may, perhaps, be forgiven, if I claim that my views on the Irish question may be as deserving of attention as those of the three eminent English statesmen who have had columns of criticism devoted to them. In their letters through the medium of the press, they have propounded their ideas for a solution of the situation now existing in my unhappy country, a situation which each of them is not without some responsibility for. One of them may be justly accused of being the arch-culprit, and is, in fact, so regarded by ninety-nine out of every hundred Irishmen who devote any thought to the matter. Did not he (Mr. Asquith) have an opportunity such as never before presented itself of squashing the foreign-hatched plans which have since matured to such alarming proportions? The King’s writ no longer runs, and hundreds of thousands of loyal subjects, living in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, and parts of Ulster, are so terrorised that they dare not proclaim their loyalty lest they should be murdered, or have their property destroyed. Perforce they are obliged to profess an adherence to Sinn Fein, which is revolting to their inmost feelings.

Had Mr. Asquith but done his obvious duty at the outset, a duty more clearly apparent after the Easter rebellion of 1916, he would have imposed the Military Service Acts on the country; that course would unquestionably have been hailed with lively satisfaction, not only by the entirely loyal section of the people, but by many who had reason to suppose that they were suspect of being implicated with the extremists; and Ireland would to-day be at peace within her own borders. The fact that he failed to do so is but another added to the many examples of the utter inability of British statesmen to understand the psychology of the Irish, which is the main reason why successive Governments have tried in vain to rule the country.

They have failed, mainly, because they have almost invariably shown timidity, when faced with open signs of unrest. Crime has only been punished in a half-hearted fashion. They have yielded to the agitator until agitation obtained the status of a well-paid profession. They permitted sedition to be taught in the National Schools, and the children to be brought up to believe that England is the hereditary enemy of their country. They have, for the sake of votes, coquetted with Home Rule, until, as we now see, and as many Irishmen have for long foreseen, a bare-faced demand for entire independence—an Irish Republic, no less—is backed up by a series of dastardly crimes, perpetrated so far with an amazing immunity from the hangman’s rope for the authors.

But there is a remedy, and despite all that has happened—is happening—by no means a difficult one, given a Government with sufficient backbone to carry it through. The first essential is to drop all this humbug about Ulster, and consider Ireland as a whole. One would imagine that, outside “the six counties,” there is no loyalty in Ireland. It is a grave error to suppose that in the other three provinces there is not a strong leaning towards England among a large section of the community, Roman Catholic and Protestant alike, and

the strength of it would soon become apparent were it made possible for men and women to proclaim themselves without fear.

There has been too much Ulster. She had the good sense to exercise her privilege of serving the common cause in the war, but it was not difficult for Ulstermen, though it was for the thousands of gallant Irishmen in the other provinces who did so, while many thousands more would have been glad to have had the excuse of conscription for getting into khaki—one which a strong Government would have given them. Ulster has had far more than her meed of praise for doing her simple duty. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that there was a gun-running episode, and an Ulster Volunteer movement before activities of this description were in being in the other provinces, so that her hands are not altogether clean; moreover, the fanatical bigotry of the Ulster Orangemen is probably the greatest obstacle to a better understanding among the Irish themselves.

Say to Ireland, "You are an integral and indispensable part of the United Kingdom, and we intend that you shall remain such. You have hitherto enjoyed certain privileges which the other parts of the kingdom have neither been granted nor demanded. We intend, as soon as may be, to level things up, and to pass a Devolution Bill which will give you in common with England, Scotland and Wales control over your purely local affairs, with proportionate representation in the Imperial Parliament. When that Bill becomes law, you will possess precisely the same privileges as the other component parts of the United Kingdom—neither more nor less—and you will be obliged to compose your differences, which are largely imaginary, and properly carry out its provisions. Meanwhile, we are fully determined to go to any extreme to re-establish law and order throughout the country, and to maintain it."

In short, govern Ireland, without pandering to this side, or to that, with firmness and with justice. Cease regarding her as but a pawn in the political game, and I predict that in a surprisingly short time there will arise a new Ireland proud of her membership, not only of the Kingdom, but of the Empire, and as jealous of her fair name as the most ardent Imperialist among us could desire.

Continue to display weakness and hesitancy, continue to tinker with Home Rule bills and concessions to Ulster, and it would be better to abandon Ireland to her fate at once. The ruffians who have terrorised the country no more represent the soul of Ireland than Lenin and his gang represent the soul of Russia; but their power of destruction is relatively as great, their methods similar. It is for England to enable Ireland to find herself, and I have indicated what I am firmly convinced is the only way.

THOS. POLSON.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

SIR.—The *Daily News* is inviting its readers to suggest schemes for reducing unemployment. Herewith mine, which was forwarded to the *Daily News*, but which that paper has not yet published.

Let all the coal-miners in the British Isles be dismissed, and let Chinese labour be imported to work our collieries; the compound-system adopted with so much success in Kimberley, South Africa, might be enforced in the mining areas.

The result would be an abundant supply of cheap coal, and this would give such a stimulus to all industries that the dismissed colliers might easily obtain employment in other trades.

HERVEY DE MONTMORENCY.

THE CONQUERING TENOR.

SIR.—The writer of this brilliant and very true article does not quite touch the spot, even if he intends to. The root of the matter is the power of the human voice, with its special charm (quality and tone) thoroughly developed, upon the temperament of the hearers, and, through that temperament *en masse*, upon that of the wills. All the effects are produced or bye-products of

these actions and re-actions of influence. The writer gets near it when he talks of a singer's "peculiar gifts," and of the conquering tenor being "an expert at stimulating sexual emotion."

A young lady said to me years ago, while we were listening to a conquering tenor in opera, "I am in love with that voice." There are very few people indeed, "which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer: charm he never so wisely"—only the adder, as the psalm says!

All this charm of particular qualities of voice also accounts for the utter failure of the cinema to satisfy us in drama, for of course, when it attempts the latter, it is a mere clown grinning through a horse collar—"there was no voice, nor any that answered."

J. PARRY.

SPIRITUALISM AND SANITY.

SIR.—I cordially agree that you can only class among the psychically unstable those of us who depart from the secular standard of sanity into the regions of spiritualism and hallucination.

The only just alternative is to revise that standard, and to render it less time-serving than it is to-day.

T. F. BISHOP.

FATHERS AND SONS.

SIR.—I am an obscure person of no particular importance, but it is just possible that the opinion of such a one upon a matter which appears to have aroused considerable public attention during the last six weeks, might be of some slight interest to you and to your readers. The matter to which I allude is the controversy which has arisen as the result of a now famous letter from Mr. Beverley Nichols, which appeared in the *Morning Post* of August 28th. I did not see the letter at the time of its publication; but I happen to have read a good many of the criticisms of it which have since appeared in the press, particularly those which have appeared in the SATURDAY REVIEW. On reading the letter from Mr. Nichols himself, which appears in your current issue, I took the advice which he offers to your readers. I procured a copy of the *Morning Post* of August 28th, and read the original letter. The conclusion at which I immediately arrived was that never in the annals of newspaper controversy has an individual been subjected to such a series of flagrant misrepresentation, by those who do not agree with him, as has the present President of the Oxford Union. He has been accused of Bolshevism and heaven knows what else. It is true that he employs the phrase "a Soviet of youth," but surely one might have supposed that the old fossils who are so keen on upholding the dignity of age would, at least, in the course of their long experience, have learnt to distinguish the difference between a literal and a metaphorical expression! Personally, I dislike Bolshevism in all its forms as intensely as any man living, not even excepting Mr. Winston Churchill, but I am bound to say that I failed to discover any Bolshevik tendencies whatever in the delightful letter of Mr. Beverley Nichols. I have no axe to grind in this affair. I am a confirmed Tory; Mr. Nichols is an Asquithian Liberal. But, so far as I am able to judge, there was in his letter no statement which was not true and no sentiment which cannot be regarded as wholly admirable.

THOMAS HOPE FLOYD.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

SIR.—You may well oppose as dangerous "the wholesale dilution" of the franchise, whether the "millions of women and girls" be intelligent or ignorant; for to be strong a nation must be homogeneous, and to be homogeneous, the mind of a nation must think and act as one man.

In America, woman suffrage is the result of carrying a joke too far, for as such it began—the newspapers waxing fat from the huge sums elicited from vain and wealthy suffragists whose vanity was stirred by the acclaim of the press.

Woman may have the same *right* to vote as man, may be more precocious and quick-witted at times than man, but her endowments fit her for tasks that differ fundamentally.

A physical hermaphrodite is a body half male and half female—pitifully and hideously impotent; woman suffrage will create a *mental* hermaphrodite with a *mind* half male and half female. History proves that “each to its own kind” is a law that underlies every form and kind of life; man and woman function differently with mind as well as with body, even in matters that should invite analogous conclusions; to merge the male and female mind will prove as disastrous to the nation as the merged male and female bodies are to the hermaphrodite, for beneficent qualities with which each is endowed and inures to the benefit of the other, will be lost. Political amalgamation of the male and female mental qualities into a national mind will nullify the joint function in the mind of a nation as surely as amalgamation of the male and female physical qualifications in one body nullifies the function of the body. With a mind half male and half female, we don’t know where we are going, but we are on our way.

National problems will be complicated through resort to such trickery and juggling with the electorate as to confuse the issues, distort the problems, and becloud the vision of the pilot of state. The *canard*, “He kept us out of War,” inveigled the women to vote for war; fake slogans of like character will be multiplied without end, and wrap an already bewildered electorate in darkness.

The confusion and chicanery that looms ahead will surely imperil the Ship of State; greed and avarice are imbedded too strongly in the human heart to risk an experiment with a fool’s paradise.

K. D. KISSENGER.

Kansas City, Missouri.

FREEZING OUT.

SIR,—Your Note in a recent SATURDAY REVIEW, in reply to “One Mother,” seems to my mind rather inconsistent.

Are not those who fought paying 15s. in the £ now equally with those who were too old? But when you say, “We do not believe that any of those who volunteered are unemployed. We speak of the soldiers,” I am bound to say, with all respect, that I am afraid that you have not given the subject the attention it deserves.

Watch the Labour Exchanges, and notice the 1914-15 ribbons worn by men who unfortunately have to seek work there.

I, of course, appreciate that you have not the time for that, but inquiries can be made. I myself am out of employment, and I am a 1914-15 man, but in my case I am disabled in the right hand, and might be classed by some, as “unemployable.”

Of course, within limits I am prepared to admit that, “everybody contributed according to his capacity,” but some people’s contributions were naturally more than others; and I now think that it is the duty of each and every one of us, to assist each other to the best of our ability, and that a special effort should be made to place the ex-Service man, able and willing to work, be he volunteer or conscript—officer or man.

Unfortunately, this talk of “Freezing out,” etc., is not very helpful, but I can assure X. Q. P. that every unemployed ex-Service man is not after his life, neither are they “hot-headed agitators”; in fact, some of them are quite decent fellows, and think for themselves.

Of course, an unemployed and hungry man is not always reasonable, but the same applies to all classes of the community, given the same conditions.

In conclusion, may I remind you that Lord Haig is to a great extent responsible for this so-called ex-Service stunt? All honour to him—but what a contrast to the Duke of Wellington, who described his men as “the scum of the earth!”

CHAS. F. BRITCHER,
Late Private, The Essex Regt.

REVIEWS

FAITH, FACT AND OMISSION.

Europe and the Faith. By Hilaire Belloc. Constable. 17s. 6d. net.

“THE Faith is Europe. And Europe is the Faith. Europe will return to the Faith, or she will perish.” So Mr. Belloc summarises, perhaps a shade too sharply, the historical argument of this book and the moral which he wishes us to draw from it. The Faith, or as ordinary people would say, the Catholic Church, spread through Europe under the Roman Empire, the unitive political State having unconsciously prepared the way for the Church. The Empire itself did not “fall in 476,” but its administrative framework loosened. For a thousand years in the so-called Dark Ages the Faith remained untouched; then came “the great disaster of the Reformation” which divided Europe. But the Reformation, in Mr. Belloc’s view, would not have done so much harm had it been confined to Germany, which had never had the Roman State tradition; it was when England, which had been an integral part of the Empire, left the Faith for the errors of Protestantism that Europe was finally split. That split, Mr. Belloc says quite plainly, must be healed if Europe is not to perish, and it can only be healed in one way—by England accepting the Faith again, but he notices as a curiosity of historical development, that Ireland, which was not part of the Roman civil tradition, is now one of the most loyal parts of the Roman ecclesiastical tradition, while England has precisely reversed the rôles.

Such is a very bare but not, we think, unjust summary of Mr. Belloc’s historical position. He states his case with conspicuous ability and force, and on many points, such as the essential continuity of the Roman Empire, there can be no serious dispute. One is inclined to think that, for the purposes of his argument, he is compelled to minimise the influence of the Saxon and Dane in English history, just as Stubbs, Freeman, and Green exaggerated it; these things will happen when one is arguing a case. And there is another incidental weakness which will be a stumbling-block to readers; it is that whenever Mr. Belloc cannot explain anything, supernatural machinery comes on the scene. As for instance: “I, for my part, incline to believe that wills other than those of mortals were in combat for the soul of Europe as they are in combat daily for the souls of individual men, and that in this spiritual battle, fought over our heads perpetually, some accident of the struggle turned it against us for a time. If that suggestion be fantastic (which no doubt it is) at any rate none other is complete.”

That is a very touching and nobly-written confession of belief, but as it stands, it is rather too heroic a remedy—as indeed Mr. Belloc seems to recognise—and it may be prayed in aid by his opponents. A Protestant historian of the Inquisition in Spain, for instance, might see the veritable hand of Satan moving Torquemada, where Mr. Belloc presumably would only perceive the Church militant in action. Not to multiply instances, we think that this particular method should not be used—if it is used at all, which is very doubtful—outside a professedly theological or philosophical work. It may be the true explanation—and so also may the intervention of the gods in the Iliad be the plain statement of historical fact. But it is easily open to abuse; indeed, if any author disapproves of the tone of any review, one does not see what is to prevent him from saying that wills other than those of mortals have been in combat for the soul, or alleged soul, of the reviewer, and that the powers of evil have won an easy victory. This line of argument reminds one too much of the New Spiritualism, and we expect something better from Mr. Belloc than from Sir Conan Doyle.

Mr. Belloc is much more effective when he discusses the decline of Protestantism, although it is rather too great an exaggeration to suggest that Protestantism is on the threshold of atheism. (There have been

atheists in the very home of the Faith itself). The purely Protestant position is becoming as it was bound to become, increasingly difficult, and an author of Mr. Belloc's way of thinking is right to point that out. But he would have done well, in the interests of fairness, to recognise that there was something to be said on the other side; and one would have liked, for other reasons, a rather fuller analysis of the altogether unique position of Anglicanism. Mr. Belloc is too honest a thinker to dismiss it merely as a Protestant belief like the rest in these days, one imagines, since it is obviously a compromise between Rome and Geneva; and it would have been interesting to see whether he ascribed its partial success to the fidelity with which it has held on to part of the old Catholic tradition, and its partial and admitted failure to its Protestantism. This book would have been the better for a critical examination of the Anglican position.

But that is not the cardinal defect of the work. We disagree with Mr. Belloc's standpoint, and with much that he says—on such matters it is, of course, useless to quarrel—but our real objection to him is not that he has twisted history to his own view—everybody does that—but that he has given us an incomplete book, and even on his own showing he has left out the vital part. He discusses at length the unified Roman State of Europe. He discusses at length the unified Roman Church of Europe. But he omits to discuss the relations between the two. Every word in his discussion of the position in mediæval Europe seems to lead up to that fundamental problem—the relation of the spiritual to the secular, the soul to the body, the Faith to the Empire. It was easily the gravest question in the Middle Ages, and Dante, the greatest figure in the Middle Ages, becomes incomprehensible without at least a working knowledge of the rough outlines of the controversy. The failure to solve that problem, and even to ensure a temporary and workable compromise, we believe to have been the real reason why both the Empire and the Church failed, as they did fail, to dominate the future of Europe, and why the confusion, or if Mr. Belloc prefers it so, the chaos and the disaster of the Reformation took the place of the orderly spiritual and political development for which men looked. Why then did men fail to solve it?

Mr. Belloc may say—we do not believe he will say it—that it was because supernatural forces intervened. In that case we shall read his views with interest and respect, but probably without conviction. He may say—and again we do not believe he will say it—that it was because the problem was insoluble. But to admit that any problem is insoluble is to confess oneself a pessimist, which is absolutely alien to Mr. Belloc's temperament. He may say—and here we should be inclined to go a great part of the way with him—that the failure was due to flaws in the political theory of the times, and to defects in spiritual vision.

The one thing he cannot afford to do is to say nothing, for the position is vital, not only to his book, which is perhaps of minor importance, but to his conception of the world and his chance of bringing it round to his point of view. This omission is strange—it gives one the uncanny impression of a headless man walking along the road, explaining at some length that he has no head and that he really would rather like to find it again, or "he will perish"—but not telling us where he lost it, and in what circumstances. There is nothing for it but for Mr. Belloc to write another book.

A NEW TOURING GROUND.

In Morocco. By Edith Wharton. Macmillan. 20s.

TANGIER, frowsy, European, yet by no means undesirable, marks the limit of most tourists' travel in Morocco. An adventurous few, driven either by curiosity, or the claims of business, penetrate as far as Fez, but names like Meknez and Marrakech, Mogador, Suffi and Rabat are to be seen in atlases rather than heard on the tongues of men. Yet Mrs. Wharton contrived even during the War to visit these places and many more, and, though she was in Morocco only a month, her book contains an extended account

of travel in that country. There is no guide-book to Morocco. A decade ago there was scarcely a wheeled vehicle in the country; to-day carts, omnibuses and motor-vehicles are to be seen in their thousands on the excellent new French roads, and a light railway connects Rabat with Fez and Fez with a point not unreasonably distant from Marrakech; moreover, other railways are now in process of rapid construction. Morocco is the new touring-ground of Europe; the vast unknown just beyond Tangier will within twelve months begin to draw innumerable travellers to whom ancient civilizations, strange customs, and a scenery that, though monotonous, is not without grandeur and mystery, are always worthy of study.

Mrs. Wharton traversed the country in the early autumn of 1917, and saw it in the last phase of its "curiously abrupt transition from remoteness and danger to security and accessibility." That is to say, she saw it in a condition but slightly affected by European influences. Indeed, she was among a group of travellers who were the first foreigners to visit many of the places described, and she was present at more than one religious festival the sight of which had hitherto been denied to the Christian. By special permission of the Sultan, she entered the mosque of Mansourah; at Rabat she witnessed the ancient Sacrifice of the Sheep; she visited many harems, and at Marrakech was received by the Caïd into his own household. Her book is not a guide. It is an eager, vivid description of people and places, of buildings and streets, of customs and ceremonies. Nothing seen by her sensitive, unsparing eye is omitted, and her nervous style never fails to convey the effect at which she aims. The volume, which is admirably illustrated, closes with a sketch of Moroccan history and a note on Moroccan architecture.

LONDON SCENES.

The Street of Faces. By Charles Vince. Philip Allan. 15s. net.

THIS book is a sign of the times. At first the restrained beauty of the binding and the really admirable illustrations by Mr. J. D. M. Harvey roused a suspicion that this was one more of the books where the pictures are everything and the text almost nothing except an excuse. But a little sampling of its pages shows that the suspicion is unfounded. Mr. Vince really seems to have written because he likes writing, and his publisher to have printed him because he thought him worth printing; or, in other words, the trade of the essayist is reviving. For Mr. Vince is nothing if not essayistical—the word is really necessary in modern criticism—and his ideal is that branch of the business which thinks of Lamb rather than Macaulay. There are a dozen places in these pages where one remembers the little tricks of Lamb—the mild surprises, the gentle humour, the obvious searching after an attitude, and the evident pleasure in it when it is a good one; presumably the failures are destroyed, and one suspects that Mr. Vince's waste-paper basket has seen a good many blotted pages.

The book is really a whimsical man's tour through London, and the stickler for accuracy would pick holes in it. But then London is a big place, and one man sees—or hears—what another misses. Only the other day, for instance, a long article was published on the decay of English humour, in which the lament was made that nobody ever heard anything in modern London that made one laugh. A kindly providence so arranged that the very next spoken words heard by the present writer after that dismal conclusion were fragments of a conversation on top of a motor-bus when an obvious country cousin expounded to her friend: "I think London's lovely. I went to Selfridge's this morning, and that's beautiful; and I went to the National Gallery this afternoon, and that's beautiful too."

London, then, is whatever you find therein; and if Mr. Vince finds fancies where Baedeker finds hotels, and Sir L. Chiozza Money finds statistics, it does not follow that he is wrong. Statisticians are sometimes

more fanciful than the essayists, when they have a case to prove; and perhaps fortunately, 'The Street of Faces' does not seem to prove anything, except that the author has a pleasant style and an eye for the picturesque, which even a spell of duty in the War Office has not sensibly affected.

AGAINST NAPOLEON.

Memoirs of the Count de Rochechouart: 1788-1822. John Murray. 16s. net.

THESE memoirs are a first-class historical document of the period before and after the Napoleonic Wars. The Count de Rochechouart was only a lad when the Revolution broke out, and practically without money he made his way across Europe and took service with the Emperor of Russia, whom he served until 1814, when he was appointed to a military post under the restored Bourbons in Paris, and took a prominent part in the refounding of royalist France.

His early travels in Italy, Galicia, and Turkey read almost like a page out of Dumas, but he was not a keen observer of the manners or customs of strange people, and consequently these first pages are of little serious value. But his activities at the Russian Court in the later stages of the war against Napoleon brought him nearer to the centre of things, and he actually saw the disastrous retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow. On this he throws an important light. "Cold and hunger annihilated this splendid army, and all these military plans. If Napoleon had remained forty-eight hours longer at Moscow, or on the way to the Beresina, he would have found the river frozen to its depths, and could have crossed wherever he chose, and saved his artillery, wagons, and baggage; he did not do this."

The Count, who admits that "Napoleon's plan was admirable, and its success certain according to all human probability," adds the pious reflection that "it was the decree of Providence alone" which brought about this great disaster—a comment which the sardonic historian might place side by side with Napoleon's own doctrine that "God is on the side of the big battalions."

A very moving picture is given of some phases of the great retreat. It is too long to quote, but one sentence will show its character. "A dreadful scene met our eyes at a monastery that had formerly belonged to monks of St. Basil; not only the dead, but the living, were being thrown out of the windows on every storey, to make room for the sick and wounded Russians, who were arriving in crowds." This brutality was stopped in the name of the Tsar.

In the later stages of the war, and particularly in the battle of Leipsic, the differences of opinion between the Allied military commanders are clearly shown; it is possible that Napoleon might even then have won the day, had not a sudden fever rendered him physically incapable of the command. None of his marshals was equal to the responsibility.

After the collapse of the French Empire, the true story of Blücher in Paris is here told—we believe for the first time. It is well known that the Prussian Field-Marshal had determined to blow up the Bridge of Jena. The King of Prussia pretended to protest, and admitted that blowing up the bridge would not alter the fact that the Prussians had been beaten at Jena. Probably the Hohenzollerns of that day did not object very much to Blücher's idea, but when the Tsar heard of this contemplated act of vandalism, he declared that "he would go in person, and take up his position on the bridge, and see if Blücher had the audacity to blow it up while he was there." The Duke of Wellington also posted a sentry on the bridge, and that graceful structure was thus saved from the barbarian.

The Rochechouart memoirs become thin and unsatisfactory after the peace, and give few details of the new French society which Balzac was afterwards to describe so brilliantly; and with the Count's retirement into the country in 1822, they practically cease. But as they stand, they are a valuable contribution to a period of which we can never have too much information.

MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC AT THE KINGSWAY HALL.—It should not seem strange, on the face of it, that the broad, handsome street which runs northward from the Strand to Holborn contains both an opera house and a concert hall. Yet, although both have been there for the last eight or ten years, neither has so far justified the expectations with which it was built. The much-vaunted London Opera House has for some time been a picture theatre, and as such is said to accommodate Sir Oswald Stoll's patrons very comfortably; but few people ever wanted to go to it to hear an opera—a fact which the late Mr. Hammerstein fully realised and never understood. The Kingsway Hall, erected in 1912, has been even more of a puzzle. Well designed for concert purposes, the auditorium, with its deep, wide gallery or "grand circle," stretches back from the platform with a broad, dignified sweep, and allows seating-room for a large number of people. On the other hand, the orchestra is comparatively narrow and unusually steep; while the entire back is occupied by the organ, an instrument of huge dimensions, chiefly remarkable for the noisy, strident tone of its larger pipes, and forming altogether a too resonant background for an ordinary band of 50 or 60 performers. Hence, in some degree no doubt, the neglect from which the place has suffered, except from the bodies that have found it useful for religious services, conferences, labour meetings, Masonic gatherings, and so forth. Probably the first person to discover in it what he elects to term "The Hall of Perfect Acoustics" (we never heard it called by that title before) was Mr. Thomas Quinlan, who began there last Saturday afternoon a series of subscription concerts, to which we recently drew attention. Unfortunately in our opinion it was just the acoustics of the building that left most to be desired, apart from the mistake that the partition at the back of the hall floor is largely made of glass, and so allows the noise of voices and footsteps in the passage outside to disturb the peace within. The concert itself was fairly attractive, though better are to come along during the series. It included a refined yet brilliant performance of Lalo's violin concerto in F minor by Mme. Renée Chemet, some effective excerpts from Russian operas sung by Mr. Rosing, and examples of Bach and Tchaikovsky, played by the British Symphony Orchestra under Mr. Adrian C. Boult. The accompaniments in future may with advantage be kept under more, and a quieter spot found for the brass and drums than a conspicuous corner high up next to the organ.

A VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL RHAPSODY.—We listened very attentively to Mr. Arthur Bliss's new composition the other night at Miss Dorothy Helmrich's recital at Wigmore Hall, and our distinct impression was that the experiment is a mistake. The two voices (here a soprano and a tenor) are supposed to blend with certain instruments (flute, English horn, string quartet, and double bass), and to undertake an equal share with them in the unfolding of a cleverly characteristic movement, the poetic import of which is uncertain, because unaided by words sung or otherwise. Unfortunately they refused to blend, the voices seemed rather to interrupt the flow of instrumental ideas without expressing any ideas of their own, having, indeed, none to express. The continuous vowel-sound "ah" quickly palled, as it always does, suggesting nothing so much as a *solfège* at a singing lesson; and it only sounded worse when the voices, striving to rise to a climax, shouted out their open high notes on a strident, noisy tone. Here the various *timbres* never matched in the least, though the composer mercifully kept his English horn in the background whilst the singers were at it, as did Wagner in similar bits of 'Tannhäuser' and 'Tristan.' But, like the garish colours in a certain type of modern canvas, the contrast appeared to us brutal, harsh, and conveyed no sense of real beauty or tonal significance. It reminded one of the solid slabs of mother-of-pearl stuck on to the paint to represent the jewelled garments in a Russian ikon, and to our thinking the human voice was intended for different and better purposes. Among other things, Miss Helmrich, who has a pretty voice, displayed a skilful command of patter, but was very indistinct and tremulous in her more serious songs, and used for them too dark and dull a tone. We heard the frequent bell just as Bach intended in 'Strike, thou hour so long expected,' and rather liked it. But the constant repetition of the "strike" on a lugubrious note was found rather trying at the present juncture.

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OTHER RECITALS.—Mr. Frank Merrick is to be congratulated on having discovered for his recital programme material so open to discussion as Max Reger and Granados, especially when critical opinion in regard to their works remains so diametrically opposed. The result is bound to be "fun," unless perchance the merits of a promising young pianist become lost to view amid the dust of the various encounters. Reger is always clever, but can be terribly dull. Granados is a good deal overrated, save in his own country, where he can be properly appreciated, because the atmosphere is Spanish, and the playing in keeping with it. In this country an English pianist is rather solemn for the job, albeit one esteemed London writer beckons his readers with a "This way for the Goyescars!" (sic). Miss Kathleen Parlow at the last moment changed the opening item of her recital from Locatelli to Vivaldi, and played the latter's Chaconne in what was certainly masterful fashion, if for once strict mechanical accuracy and finish of technique overshadowed the soloist's intentions as to beauty of conception or warmth of feeling. In a violinist of Miss Parlow's ability there was no need for the sacrifice. Another talented young fiddler, Miss Jessie Snow, who gave a recital the previous evening, set herself a less exacting task, and, besides playing a charming 'Légende' by Delius, again emphasised the graceful ideas set forth in the Rhapsody in E minor by her teacher, Mr. W. H. Reed. The vocal recitals given by Miss Ethel Collinge and Mr. John Buckley clashed—unluckily for those who would gladly have heard each programme through. There were many such; for both these singers are agreeable to listen to, particularly when they are sensible enough to choose pieces that really suit them. Miss Collinge must remember that she is a lyric, not a dramatic, soprano. The visit of the Flonzaley Quartet was all too brief, but a triumph for all concerned.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS.

BOOKS.

BOOKS RARE AND OUT OF PRINT.—Beardsley Early and Later Works, 2 vols., £2 10s. 0d.; Napier's Peninsular War, 6 vols., calf, 1832, £4 10s.; The Satirist, coloured plates, 11 vols., £9 9s. (1808); Beesley's History, Banbury, 1841, 35s.; Bell's Shakespeare, 1785, illustrated, 12 vols., calf, 35s.; Hoppé's Studies from the Russian Ballet, 15 beautiful Studies, 6s., pub. 21s.; Rabelais' Works, 5 vols., 1901, 21s.; Thornton's Americanisms; An American Glossary, 2 vols., 7s. 6d., pub. 30s. 1912; Henry's Finger Prints, 2s. 6d.; Thackeray's Works, 26 vols., Caxton Pub. Co., £4 4s.; Story of the Nations, 65 vols., fine set, £10 10s.; 19 Early Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley, only 150 done, 35s.; Balzac's Droll Stories, illus., 11s.; Salome, illus. by Beardsley, 11s.; Aubrey Beardsley, by Arthur Symons, large paper copy, 1905, £2 2s.—Send also for Catalogue, 100,000 bargains on hand. If you want a book, and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me. Send me a list of books you will exchange for others. EDWARD BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP, 14-16, John Bright Street, Birmingham.

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SPORT

Last week there was a private meeting at the Royal Thames Yacht Club to see whether anything could be done to abolish the empirical handicap, and to introduce in its stead a scale of time allowance based on the yachts themselves, and not on what they ought to do in varying circumstances. With so many excellent large vessels available—during the summer there were about a dozen—it is indeed a pity that we cannot have a really first, or "A," class. All the boats racing during the summer were as good as we have seen in the best of years, and, indeed, better than most. But one and all were at the mercy of the handicapper, and as no handicapper ever gave satisfaction to every one, there was the inevitable discontent. *Britannia* will be out again next year, and possibly even more racing yachts of the first class than we had during July, August and September. There is thus the hope of a good season if some ingenious person can fix a scale of time allowance which allows for model, construction and rig.

After the recent races for the America's Cup the Larchmont Yacht Club of America expressed a wish to send to this country a few boats, designed and built to one of our smaller classes. The offer is a very sporting one, and should be accepted on this side. No class has yet been decided, but it is thought desirable to make it for one of the International open classes, the National classes being, perhaps, too restricted for International contests. At all events a suitable class should be selected without delay, so that next summer American boats might come over. Their advent would stimulate racing in the smaller classes more than anything save one hoped-for event which lies in every yachtsman's heart to-day, and that is that the Prince of Wales should build a small racing craft. Not a large first-class boat like *Britannia*, which was so successful under the flag of his father and grandfather, but a moderate size boat. This would stimulate racing among the younger men as nothing else could.

Racegoers have a language of their own, and anyone who had not learned it might be forgiven for failing to understand why he should be called upon to sympathise with somebody who "had got Bracket in a double." Bracket won the Cesarewitch, the seeker for sympathy had backed her, probably at anything over 100 to 1, in conjunction with a horse intended to run for the Cambridgeshire; thus he has those comfortable odds against a short-priced entry for next Wednesday's race, and the trouble has been doubt as to whether the handicap will take place. If the Newmarket Houghton Meeting is abandoned, a matter undecided at the time of writing, sport may be resumed later; for there are fixtures to the end of November, important ones at Liverpool, Derby and Manchester. Few of the best horses in training will be seen at these places, however, and argument will continue throughout the winter as to the merits of the principal ones. As regards two-year-olds, Alan Breck ought to beat Monarch, winner of the Middle Park Plate, at least he did so in the summer. But records this year are very puzzling and inconsistent. No two-year-old stands out, nor does any three-year-old or any one of the older horses.

The Ministry of Transport, so assiduously and justifiably attacked on all hands, would seem to have some excuse for its existence now that the actuality of a miners' strike and the possibility of a railwaymen's strike renders some central organisation of road transport imperative. Probably this fact provides the clue to its continued existence, but it has not been wholly idle in the meantime. It now announces that at the New Year an improved method of road directions and signs is to be established over the entire road system of the British Isles. Some such improvement has long been overdue on our highways, where, through the negligence or stupidity of local authorities who

fail to set up sign-posts, or to maintain them in a legible state of repair, motorists are more often than not compelled to proceed, as Mr. Chesterton would put it, "to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head,"—a method of progress both irritating to the temper and injurious to the pockets of poor, ignorant travellers.

A recent golf match shows that the best professionals can give the best amateurs more than two holes in a round. It is in putting that the professionals excel, being very much steadier and more certain than the brilliant amateur, but even the professional expert is not above nerves. Drives were mis-hit, and putts were missed to an unusual extent in the important final at Richmond. The modern ball makes the game much easier than it used to be—at any rate, drives which would formerly have been considered of heroic length are now common.

The ever increasing popularity of lawn tennis has produced a considerable movement in favour of the game being recognised at the public schools. The movement, steadily gaining ground, has been somewhat impeded by being misunderstood. Its opponents point indignantly to the absurdity of wishing to replace cricket by lawn tennis. Such a wish would indeed be absurd: fortunately, however, nobody is so foolish as to desire that. But every boy cannot play cricket each afternoon; and there are, besides, a number to whom cricket is distasteful. That these boys should be enabled to play lawn tennis rather than idle away their time is reasonable enough.

Many objections are raised: the difficulty of providing lawns, the selfishness of the game, its old-womanliness. A week spent at Wimbledon during the championship meeting should cure the critics of this last objection, and the second can hardly be defended when it is realised that fives and racquets—similar games—are freely indulged in; and that cricket, for that matter, has become an individualist game. The question of providing and keeping up grounds is admittedly difficult to-day; yet hard courts could in most schools be laid out without interfering with the other sports, and could certainly be maintained at a cost equal to, or less than, that of racquets and fives courts. But the most urgent argument in favour of the scheme is that the supremacy of the British Isles, the originators of the game, is passing into other hands, which have specialised in the sport from their youth up, and that we can never hope to regain that supremacy until we begin to train our athletes younger. Lawn tennis players, like golfers, are not born, they are made; and it is only long and early practice that can produce top form.

While it is pleasing to see the form retained by a veteran like Mr. Ritchie, who has held his own very well in the latest Covered Courts Championship at Queen's Club, West Kensington, the country still lacks an adequate supply of coming men players. We have to turn to the women to discover plenty of promising talent. Miss McKane, Miss Colyer and others play with plenty of *brio*. And they have improved in service, where our present male players are notoriously behind the Australians and Americans. The stately English style is all very well, but it requires to be "speeded up," if we may use an effective colloquialism.

A great fuss is made about professional football; but it is not a sport, as at present carried on, which lovers of a clean game can commend. It ought not to be necessary frequently to suspend players for disgraceful conduct, or to complain that referees have not given fair decisions. The rules are frequently broken on purpose. When there is danger of a goal being scored, a back will turn goal-keeper and handle the ball. The attendant crowds show more local feeling than impartiality, though the players engaged have as often as not no local status at all, having been purchased from Scotland or elsewhere.

MOTOR NOTES

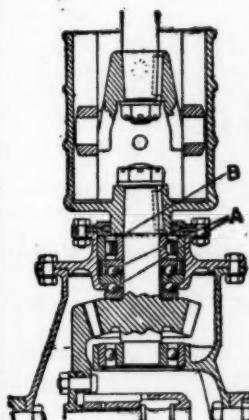
Quite a number of our readers, controlling various business concerns, are practically interested in transport problems, and to them the Commercial Motor Show, in progress at Olympia, London, as we write, should provide enlightenment and assistance. This exhibition certainly indicates some substantial advances in industrial automobile engineering, and demonstrates in a convincing manner the real effort commercial motor designers are now making to meet the needs of the moment. The uses to which the internal combustion engine is adapted are indeed varied. From ploughing the ground to every form of haulage and transport the petrol engine now proves a reliable and generally economical servant. At this Show one can inspect lorries and commercial cars of all descriptions, and it is pleasing to see how the body and equipment makers have advanced in adapting similar chassis to serve widely different trades. A few years ago one could buy quite a number of serviceable commercial chassis, but on most of them was specified one or other of standard forms of bodies. One could buy an open lorry or a closed van, but if one's business required an entirely different type of body, one generally had to have it specially designed. Nowadays things are different, and at this Show one has a choice of vehicles that must cover the needs of practically every industrial process. Beyond this, one notes that it is still possible to buy the well known commercial motors in chassis form, and that even in this year of high prices, a reasonable reduction is made in most cases when one requires to purchase the chassis only. There will probably always be a good market for reliable commercial chassis of various capacities, however clever the body designers may be in evolving bodies to suit varied requirements.

Petrol vehicles have not, of course, a clear field in the industrial motor world. The steamer still well holds

its own, and for certain classes of work over given distances, is the more economical. We have been impressed by the businesslike appearance of many steam lorries and tractors at this Show, and by the way in which details have been improved to overcome the lingering objections to the external combustion vehicle. Other notable advances have been demonstrated in electric vehicles, and one may inspect electric chassis adapted to many purposes. In municipal work, the electric commercial motor has already made good, and many localities have to thank it for effecting considerable economies over the old horse service. For service as a delivery van in such industries as the dairy and confectionery trades, the electric chassis has lately done very well, as also for heavier work. Provided that the right type of batteries are specified and that charging facilities are always readily available, it can often effect substantial economies. The electric commercial car is confined to comparatively slow speeds, but it has the advantage of being easy to drive, practically without vibration, and entirely without engine noise or exhaust. Its range of action on one charge of the batteries is, of course, strictly limited, and therefore it is far more suitable for regular short journeys than for cross country work. In the latter respect there is nothing to beat the petrol driven vehicle.

Although every business man has an idea that motor transport plays an important part in the commercial life of to-day, few not immediately concerned with its conduct realise how far-reaching this already is. Enquiring of various big commercial houses in the larger cities, we have ourselves been surprised at the long distances regularly and profitably covered by many different types of commercial motors in their service. Such trips as London to the North Midlands, Wales, and the far South West are undertaken almost daily by the delivery motors of some business houses, and the extent to which these concerns are now independent of railway service, is quite remarkable.

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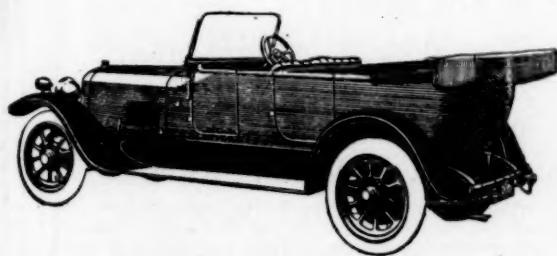


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THE CITY

Basic conditions in the Stock Exchange are improving. After many weary weeks the ice of uncertainty is at last broken, and the long-threatened coal strike is with us. Nothing to crow about in this, one might say, but the fact remains that practically the worst is now known, and to the Stock Exchange the worst is always preferable to uncertainty. Apprehension is giving place to anticipation of the end of the strike, and dealers are trimming their sails accordingly. Business in general is naturally at a low ebb, but sellers are few, and if the ordinary investment demand is curtailed, it is far from being a negligible factor.

Particular ground for satisfaction is the absence of any "open account" during this great industrial crisis, a state of affairs for which the retention of wartime regulations is responsible. Consequently underlying conditions are essentially healthy, with markets—and notably those in home securities—ripe to reflect any improvement in the general situation. The point to which the attention of investors should be directed is that, while any noteworthy improvement in prices must necessarily await developments, there is now little scope for further depreciation.

That confidence in the ultimate future of industry is justified there need be no question, and that such confidence already exists among investors is demonstrated by the satisfactory reception accorded—even in these troublous times—to really sound new industrial issues. A case in point is provided by the Lever issue of £4,000,000 in 8 per cent. Cumulative Preference shares, which is now officially stated to have been fully subscribed. Another case in point is the success attending the issue of £350,000 8 per cent. First Mortgage Debentures by Wiggins, Teape and Company, the well-known paper-makers. This again is an excellent industrial investment, and so great was the rush of would-be subscribers that applicants for £100 failed to obtain any allotment at all, while those for from £200 to £1,000 received £100 only. Against all this it must be somewhat mortifying to the Government that of the £7,500,000 (actual) subscriptions sought to Local Loans Stock the other day the public found only a little over £2,000,000. This result, however, is probably due in some measure to the latter-day tendency to await the closing of the lists, where Government issues are concerned, in the hope of picking up stock at a discount. The stock is, of course, an excellent investment—far preferable to Housing Bonds—and there is little doubt that the present modest discount will soon give place to a reasonable premium. In this connection it is worth recalling that a month ago, before the recent issue was scented, the old Local Loans Stock was quoted in the neighbourhood of 53.

An item of the week of interest to industrial investors is the registration as a public company of Jute Industries, Ltd. The capital is £7,000,000 in shares of £1 each, 4,000,000 being cumulative Participating Preference and the balance Ordinary. The fixed dividend on the former will be 9 per cent., and they will rank for a further 6 per cent. payable out of one-third of the surplus available after the 9 per cent. has been paid to the ordinary shareholders who will take the residue. The company's formation is the outcome of a combination of half-a-dozen of the most important jute works in Dundee, under the auspices of the Commercial Bank of London. The firms in question are J. and A. D. Grimond, Thomas Bell and Sons, Gilroy, Sons and Company, Harry Walker and Sons, John N. Kyd and Company, and (subject to ratification) Cox Brothers.

Taking existing labour conditions into account, it is not surprising that the Home Railway market has reverted to a state of stagnation. Dealers, however, are called upon to take but little stock, and what does come on offer is as a rule readily absorbed, thus de-

monstrating the general view that the present industrial trouble will not be of long duration. Among Foreign Rails, Argentine stocks continue disappointing, despite the satisfactory dividends just declared, to which the Entre Ríos results are a distinct exception. A revival of general confidence will undoubtedly make its influence felt in this market. The very definite assurance of Señor Obregón that Mexico will honour her legal foreign debts, and the legal rights of both Mexicans and foreigners, has failed to instil life into the Mexican market; but here again there is no ground for concern. If the Republic can continue free of internal disorder, a prosperous future will be assured, and with the passage from words to deeds in the matter of financial obligations, her various securities will experience increasing popularity on the European bourses.

While the investing public here have been buying little, and selling less, there has lately been a certain amount of liquidation as a result of which Foreign stocks and Oil shares have principally suffered. This liquidation is entirely of continental origin, and is closely related to the big French 6 per cent. Loan now launched. When this counter-attraction is out of the way, there will presumably be recovery, and particularly in the Oil share market where, having in view the progress and prospects of the industry, the leaders stand at attractive levels. Those who confine their attention to the first-class list might well average at current quotations. An unsatisfactory feature here has been the steady selling of Scottish Americans; and this is the more regrettable, seeing that the company is believed to have a prosperous future before it. Rumours regarding new capital issues are current from time to time, but nothing definite comes out. It is a case where a little light officially thrown on the situation might do much to restore confidence.

Rubber companies' results for the past year continue, for the most part, quite satisfactory. The latest to hand are those of the Chompol (F.M.S.) Rubber Estates, which report a profit of £11,718 as compared with a modest £36 a year ago. The dividend is 6 per cent. compared with nothing in the preceding year; and after placing £3,000 to reserve, the board wisely proposed to carry forward a balance of £8,463, subject to taxation.

After a rather protracted delay, the promised interim progress report on its Norfolk shale deposits, is issued by English Oilfields, Ltd. It indicates that not only is the undertaking assured of substantial profits, but also the country has the promise of an important new national industry which will render us less dependent upon foreign sources of supply for our oil requirements. It seems demonstrated beyond question, too, that the shale deposits are of exceptional richness and extent, and most economically workable. One would have liked to find in the report indications as to whether the raising of further capital will be necessary before the bulk production stage is reached, and when that production is likely to become effective. The future of the enterprise will be keenly watched by both market and industrial interests.

Shareholders in the British South Africa (Chartered) Company do not find much ground for satisfaction in the report for 1918-19 which, owing to anticipation that the findings of the Cave Commission might have been available, makes its appearance some three months late. Some progress is disclosed; in Southern Rhodesia a surplus of £103,600 replaces a deficit of £25,200 for 1917-18, and under the heading of "commercial accounts" the surplus has advanced from £167,300 to £229,500. Northern Rhodesia, however, is much where it was, the deficit at £47,100 comparing with a previous £51,700. Market interest in Chartered shares, of course, centres mainly on the prospective Government award; otherwise there would be little to justify the current quotation of about 15s. 6d. A noteworthy comparison, or contrast, is provided by the

shares of that other chartered company, the British North Borneo, which has been a regular dividend payer for many years, and has just regained the pre-war distribution of 5 per cent. with a promise of better things to come. These shares can now be bought at about 14s. 6d.

On the subject of the future the directors of the British South African Company point out that this depends in a great measure upon the products of the land. In this connection they are distinctly sanguine, and their views are endorsed by the directors of Willoughby's Consolidated Company, whose report for 1919 is also available. The document contains but little to boast as regards the past, for the writing-off of losses much more than absorbs what would otherwise have been an accumulated available profit of £36,600, with the result that a debit of nearly £14,000 is brought into the current year's accounts. Land sales, however, are encouraging, 80,000 acres having already been sold this year as against 35,575 acres during the whole of 1919; and an encouraging statement is that the company now possesses a profit-earning asset capable of expansion in the Birthday Asbestos Mine. Unfortunately, however, the prospect of a dividend on the £700,000 of capital seems exceedingly remote.

The advance in the premium on gold continues, and appears again to be drawing attention to gold-mining shares, which, in the case of the sound undertakings, are making steadily expanding profits. With the time for the next dividend declarations rapidly approaching it is hardly surprising that South Africans in particular are receiving attention. Whether the present upward movement will make any real headway will largely depend upon Paris, but this need not concern the genuine mining investor, for all the leading shares seem undervalued in the market, and material capital appreciation appears to be a matter of time. In another mining market an attractive purchase at the moment seems to be presented in the 10-rupee shares of the Burma Corporation, which at 12s. appear to be well worth locking away to hold for par. With the financial requirements for development provided by the recent debenture issue, these shares are now on the threshold of the dividend paying stage. The commencement of dividends will necessarily restrict their speculative attractions, but should at the same time result in an improvement in the quotation to a level more in accord with the intrinsic merits of the undertaking.

What at one time looked like developing into a boom in Mexican mining securities generally has simmered down to quite small dimensions. This is just as well, because there was little to justify the glowing future which was being predicted in certain more or less irresponsible quarters. Concerning the Esperanza, at the present stage of development, it is quite impossible to give a useful prediction as to what the future has in store. The latest cabled results tell a story very different from those of a few weeks back; but the assays are none the less unusually rich, and if continued, will, of course, result in a big future for the undertaking. Much will depend upon the exploratory work at present being carried out. For the moment the shares are, as we have already said, a gamble, with the attraction that the public appear to be getting a very good run for their money.

The recently declared dividend of 12s. 6d. on its Deferred shares by the Premier (Transvaal) Diamond Company, making a total of 1,100 per cent. for the year, is drawing to them a measure of attention which may not prove in the long run to be justified. If anything comes under the "luxury" heading, it is a diamond, and we are already entering upon a period when practically the world over luxuries must be in a measure eschewed. It is therefore misleading to point out the high yield obtainable on such shares without at the same time emphasizing that this is based upon past as distinct from prospective results.

THE ANGLO-SOUTH AMERICAN BANK, LTD.

PROGRESS OF THE BUSINESS.

THE THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Anglo-South American Bank, Ltd., was held on the 20th inst., in London, Mr. Robert J. Hose presiding.

The Chairman, after dealing with the financial and industrial conditions in the various South American Republics, said: Our Chilean and Argentine Branches naturally remain the chief basis of our business abroad, and we are pleased to say that they still give us eminently good results. Our branches outside the South American Continent continue to give us every satisfaction, carrying out the operations arising from our business in South America and in London, and also gradually building up a supplementary business, which has already attained considerable importance.

In Spain trading has been difficult, largely owing to the unsettled labour conditions in the country. Notwithstanding this, however, the business of the bank has continued to be satisfactory, and our six branches there have been actively employed throughout the twelve months and have shown good results. A law has been passed imposing additional and heavy taxation on foreign banks trading in that country, which may involve a rearrangement of the conditions under which we work there, but we trust that something may be done in order that such a step may not be necessary. In Paris the growth of our business has necessitated the acquisition of new premises. The fluctuations in exchange have militated against general business, but recent official returns have shown that both imports and exports are expanding and that the national revenue is increasing. In New York also the business of the Bank continues to grow, full advantage having been taken by our agency there of the tremendous expansion in the trade of the United States with South America, which has been so marked a characteristic of recent years.

The success which has attended our Manchester Agency, established in March, 1918, has encouraged us to open a branch in Bradford, in order to attend adequately to the requirements of our customers in Yorkshire, who consist chiefly of the importers of wool from the Argentine. Although the Bradford Branch has been open only about six months, its utility has already been amply proved.

You will like me to refer to the figures in our balance sheet, and I will do so very briefly. Speaking generally, the figures show an increase which, while it may in part prove only tran-

sient, can, I think, be regarded as extremely satisfactory. The confidence of our clients is evidenced in an increase of current and deposit accounts from £42,000,000 to over £58,000,000. The business done for our merchant friends in the form of credits totals £5,400,000, as compared with £3,000,000 last year, whilst the bills received for collection total £7,800,000 as against £3,400,000. The capital account, owing to the issue of additional shares last year for cash, and also of new shares in exchange for those of the British Bank, now stands at £4,364,520, and the reserve fund has been increased from £1,750,000 by (a) the premium of £4 per share on 150,000 new shares—£600,000, and (b) premium on shares issued to the British Bank shareholders of £5 on 272,904 shares, thereby giving a total of £3,714,000. With the addition which we now propose out of our year's profits, the reserve will amount to £3,850,000. On the other side of the account we find that the cash now approaches to £28,000,000, bills receivable £20,000,000, and securities £7,000,000, making a total of £54,000,000, or over 70 per cent. of the total of our liabilities to the public.

These are days in which we regard strength and a liquid position as being of even more than usually paramount importance, and I am sure that you will agree with us that this factor must be considered in preference to that of an increase in our earning power. I do not suggest by this that the increase in our earning power is not entirely satisfactory. I think you will regard it as such, the amount being nearly double what it was last year, notwithstanding the very heavy and inevitable increase in expenses, and the fact that we have not had the use of the increased capital for the whole year.

To enable you to judge of the progress of our business in recent years, a comparative statement is attached to the balance sheet, and I trust that you feel quite satisfied with the growth of our business as evidenced therein.

We have also sent you a statement showing the combined figures of this Bank, the British Bank of South America, Ltd., and the Commercial Bank of Spanish America, Ltd. in order that you may be able to gauge without difficulty the importance of our present ramifications. You will observe therefrom that the total assets of the three Banks amount to 130 million pounds, of which 62 million pounds is in the form of cash and bills receivable; on the other hand, the balance of deposit and current accounts is over 80 million pounds.

In conclusion he moved the adoption of the report and accounts.

Sir Robert Harvey (vice-chairman) seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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